



Dwight Hall Center for Public Service and Social Justice
Founded by Undergraduates in 1886

at Yale

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**Testimony to the Appropriations Committee
In Support of Funding for After School Programs
February 21, 2013
Submitted by Johnny Scafidi
Deputy Director and Program Director, Dwight Hall at Yale**

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Johnny Scafidi and I am the Deputy Director and Program Director of Dwight Hall at Yale, Center for Public Service and Social Justice. I am present this evening as a representative of Dwight Hall at Yale, which has administered a grant from the State Department of Education to implement after school programming at Cooperative Arts and Humanities Interdistrict Magnet High School in New Haven, CT since 2010.

I urge you to re-instate the \$4.5 million After School Grant Program that was eliminated in its entirety from the State Department of Education in the Governor's proposed budget. Dwight Hall at Yale collaborates with a variety of partners including CAPA and the Shubert Theater, Yale University, and the New Haven Public Schools to implement a high-quality education and arts enrichment program that leverages the strengths of each partner to complement the culture and enhance the assets of Cooperative Arts and Humanities Interdistrict Magnet High School.

Co-Op After School maintains a supportive, nurturing, safe environment that provides students with opportunities for enrichment and experiences outside of the normal school day. The program offerings range from architecture to yoga, basketball to ceramics, world premiere musical productions to chess, and include more than 30 selections that enable students to develop new skills, nurture hidden talents, strengthen their academic performance, and develop civic responsibility. Programs are free and open to all Cooperative Arts and Humanities Interdistrict Magnet High School students and have been taught by school teachers, parents, alumni, and Yale students.

Consider that:

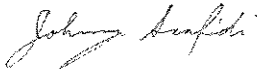
- over 250 students, or approximately 40% of the student population, will participate in Co-Op After School academic and enrichment activities during the current academic year. The program has an average daily attendance of 60 students;
- the Co-Op After School program provides over 16,500 high-quality contact hours for students during out-of-school time;

- in a survey administered in December 2012, 42% of students agreed that Co-Op After School was one of the main reasons they came to school. 62% of students expressed that Co-Op After School positively affected the way they felt about Cooperative Arts and Humanities Interdistrict Magnet High School; and
- 40% of our grant funding provides direct payment to teachers and artists in the Co-Op After School program.

Co-Op After School strengthens the connection between students and their school while simultaneously offering a safe environment during the most vulnerable portion of the day for school aged youth. The United States Department of Justice reports that “violent crimes by juveniles occur most frequently in the hours immediately following the close of school on school days” with nearly one-fifth of juvenile violent crime occurring between the hours of 3pm and 7pm. The vibrancy of the program and enthusiasm of students during Co-Op After School provides a sharp contrast to this reality.

Please restore this critical funding for the development of our youth in Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Committee tonight.

Sincerely,



Johnny Scafidi
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